



# DHS Today via E-mail

January 29, 2001

A team of employees from many state agencies has been working for more than 18 months to get the Arkansas Administrative Statewide Information System ready to go on line July 2, 2001. Seven employees from DHS have been part of the team that has been developing the system that will replace the Arkansas Human Resources Management System (ARMHS), the Arkansas Federal Grants Management System (AFGM) as well as many other internal administrative systems maintained by agencies. The new system will standardize, integrate and streamline administrative functions of Arkansas State government. DHS employees working on the project are **Donna Anderson, Marion Carlton, Darlene Henderson, Tammie Langston, Judy Reid, Ray Stafford, and Kyle Treat.**



In November 2000, the Committee on Advanced Communications and Information Technology approved the release of a \$6.9 million contingency appropriation to purchase hardware and services related to the July 2, 2001 implementation of AASIS. The appropriation includes \$4 million for hardware to support the productional system, \$2.5 million for system administration and programming services and \$400,000 for hardware to support programming and configuration testing.

This approval is instrumental in helping AASIS realize the goal of a July 2, 2001 "go-live" and further demonstrates the commitment given to the AASIS Project by the State of Arkansas, and especially the Legislature.

The project is now in the Final Preparation Phase, (November 22 through February 2), to prepare the State for "going live." Major activities include testing, preparation for end user training and agency deployment, and planning for long-range support. During this phase all remaining open issues should be closed. [During this time period, agencies will program and test any interfaces or conversions for which they are responsible].

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Agency deployment teams will also make any necessary adjustments to job roles or assignments, business processes, or documentation, in order to work most effectively with the new system. Upon successful completion of this phase, the State will be ready to run on the production AASIS System. After February 2, 2001, the remaining months before the July 2, 2001 cut-over date will be dedicated to integrated testing and end user training.

The AASIS project is developing end user training classes for the financial, purchasing, inventory, payroll and human resources areas. The classes will be offered in May-June of 2001.

This “just in time” training is designed to prevent any loss of new skills acquired that are necessary to perform AASIS transactions once the system goes live.

In order to complete the new AASIS transactions, end-users can expect to be performing different business activities. Members of the AASIS project refer to these new activities as “roles.” For example, the procurement process role of requisitioner may include the activities of defining product specifications or entering a requisition into the system.

With the assistance of project team members, state agencies will define the new roles created by AASIS for current staff prior to training. This process is called "role mapping". The agencies must first define the new roles of current staff before they can identify which training classes their staff will require.

AASIS training focuses on specific AASIS business processes and roles define who performs those processes. AASIS training will not teach end users all aspects of their jobs. This training curriculum is specific to AASIS transactions. End users must have PC and Windows literacy skills before they can attend AASIS training. State agencies are responsible for providing any training related to these skills prior to scheduling staff for AASIS training.

Training will be conducted primarily in Little Rock. If enough end users are remotely located, training may be conducted outside of Little Rock.

The AASIS training team will work with agency liaisons (**Bill Tyler is the DHS liaison**) and designates to determine specific class schedules and enrollment dates. These activities should begin soon. To learn more about AASIS and how it will change state government and affect you, visit the AASIS website through the link on DHS GOLD.

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In an effort to become compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Office of Policy & Administrative Program Management is asking DHS employees to email or send on diskettes, **any forms** that they have created on their computers. The forms need to be in Microsoft Word format and unprotected. If they are not currently in the DHS forms system, they can be added at this time. This effort is being made to get as many forms as possible online, as quickly as possible, in a format that everyone can use. Forms, or questions regarding the forms, can be emailed to [abbie.palmer@mail.state.ar.us](mailto:abbie.palmer@mail.state.ar.us) or sent to her through interoffice mail at slot 3403.



*This story from Lawrence County illustrates that working for DHS means teamwork and cooperation. It also shows that when there's a need, DHS employees step in and do what needs to be done, even though it means their own plans may have to wait. **Sally Golden**, DCFS supervisor in the county, sent in this note.*

“In the early part of November here in Lawrence County, a 3-year old shot his 4-year old brother. The 4-year-old was air lifted to LaBonheur Hospital in Memphis, and because of substandard living conditions, the other four siblings were removed. The injured child was placed in foster care when he was released from the hospital several weeks later. He is in a different home than his siblings due to his medical needs and this foster mother is a nurse. He had a colostomy bag and several other medical problems because the bullet nicked several vital organs. On December 17, doctors at LaBonheur decided he needed to have the colostomy reversed.

It was anticipated he would be in the hospital for four to five days. The foster parents went the first night. The local staff here all took turns spending the night in Memphis with this little boy until he was dismissed. He ended up staying in the hospital until Christmas Day. The foster parents both work and they had missed a lot of work due to this little boy's extensive medical needs. They were unable to spend the time with him in the hospital. DCFS employees **Beverly Lemmons, Carolyn Rorex, Tina Jordan, Selina Earsa, Christy Kisse** and myself took turns spending the night with this child. One caseworker spent two nights and another caseworker spent Christmas Eve and Christmas Day with him. **Donna VanWinkle** and **Dwight Sharp** both sent out area



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wide emails asking other workers to volunteer their help when it looked like he would be in the hospital for two weeks. The other area staff responded well and offered to assist us but we didn't need to call on them. We were very impressed with the number of people who offered to help us out even when it was during the Christmas season.

Today, the little boy is doing much better. He remains under doctor's care. All five children remain in Lawrence County in two different foster homes. The little boy's foster mother is a nurse who can deal with the colostomy, etc. and the other four siblings are in a home together. Everyone is doing well."



The new web-based IRIS system, the agency's incident reporting database, rolled out earlier this month. After some initial glitches were identified and corrected, it appears that the system is now running smoothly. The system does require the Internet Explorer browser, and will not function for those with Netscape only. When accessing the system, you should make sure you choose "IRIS" as the application on the home page. Please be aware that the new system will no longer allow you to begin a report, leave and return to finish it at a significantly later time. As with all internet sites, you are automatically knocked offline when the system has been inactive for awhile. Afterwards, partially completed reports can not then be finished and submitted. If circumstances will not allow you to complete a report in a reasonable amount of time, re-entry and submission of the entire report will be necessary. It is best to complete the entire report once you have initiated it

Anyone experiencing difficulty with the new IRIS version should first contact their local JLA/computer tech person. **Jeff Auten** with TRW designed the new system and is available for assistance. He is on the state e-mail system; his phone number is (501)682-9455 (it was incorrectly typed in the initial e-mail that was sent when the system started.) **Marsha Smith**, DHS Client Advocate, admits that she has far fewer computer skills but can help with questions about what should be entered into the system and how to enter data via IRIS. She is available by e-mail or at (501)682-8650.

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Kudos to Area IV's Columbia County DCFS staff who sold \$25 tickets and hosted a public fundraiser banquet on December 7, 2000 in Magnolia. The event was held to benefit foster children in the county and its theme was, "Keeping the Light Burning in a Child's Life in the New Millennium."

**Roy Kindle**, DCFS director, was guest speaker. He was introduced by **Shirley Flanigan-Isbell**, Community Support Program manager, and was accompanied by **Ed Foster**, Foster Care Unit manager. Kindle gave an overview of the Division's goals, objectives, resources and vision. He encouraged more community outreach and more foster and adoptive parent recruitment. He observed that all citizens are responsible for making a difference in a child's life. **Sue Bruner**, Area IV manager, presented plaques of appreciation to honorees Juvenile Division



Chancery **Judge Larry Chandler, Mr. and Mrs. James Russ**, foster parents, and **Vivian Bedwell**, Court-Appointed Special Advocate. Columbia County Supervisor Mary Ann Marshall was also presented a plaque for her years of dedication and service to the children and families of southwest Arkansas. She thanked everyone for their support in supporting the event that raised more than \$1,500 for the county's foster children.

**Bwerani Dewayne Bonner**, DCFS employee, served as emcee for the evening. **Jimmy Furr**, Together We Can specialist, led the audience in prayer and **Kim Keith**, a DCFS staff member greeted the crowd. **Shannon Watkins**, daughter DHS employee **Tyree Watkins**, sang two solos and charmed the audience. DCFS staff members **Rosie Annette Bradford, Linus Walton III, Jennifer Turner, Jennifer Plumley** and **LaWanda Davis** served as escorts. A moment of silence was held in memory of two former DCFS employees, **Laverne Ellis** and **Thelma Pickens**.



DHS Adult Protective Services Consultant **Terri Teel** and her sister-in-law, **Tammy Griffith**, are proof that individuals can make a difference. When they saw a need for a food pantry in Pike County, these two women decided to start one. In December, Grains of Grace quickly and unofficially opened for business when representatives of the Federal Emergency Management Agency contacted Grains of Grace board members and asked if they could help after the two ice storms pounded the area. A quick trip to Little Rock by Terri's husband,

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**Vance**, brought a shipment of food from the Rice Depot to help those in need. In two days the pantry served 115 people and at Christmas it was able to provide food baskets to 10 people although they wished they could have done even more.

The pantry had its official opening last week. Terri, a DAAS employee for about 13 months, covers a five-county area in her job. “I work out in the public and I saw a need for the food pantry. There are so many people who fall through the cracks, are just down on their luck or between jobs.” Her sister in law, Tammy Griffith, a teacher who works in the English as a Second Language program, saw the same need, so as Terri tells it, they discussed it and then just said, “let’s do it.”

With guidance from the Rice Depot, a non-profit food pantry supplier in Little Rock, they started three months of research and paperwork to become a non-profit corporation complete with a five-member board. The Masonic Lodge in Murfreesboro donated freshly painted space for the pantry, gave them a freezer and is even paying the utility bills. Grains of Grace is now open Friday afternoons and Saturdays, has about six volunteers and is run completely on donations. DHS, hospital, school, literacy program and law enforcement personnel refer people to the pantry. In turn, people are referred to these organizations if pantry volunteers see the need. Terri says the community response has been wonderful. The pantry has received several donations including separate \$500 and \$200 anonymous contributions.

The DYS outstanding employees for January have been chosen.

**Jackie Gibson-Rogers** began as a Youth Service Worker I and has been a Youth Service Worker II for about 13 years. Jackie is very reliable and punctual. Her strong organizational skills have contributed to improved record keeping in her unit. She has a great attitude. She is devoted to the care and welfare of the young men she works with. Her supervisor, **Carvil Strong**, says that Jackie “is the consummate team player.” Jackie is married and has two daughters. She enjoys fishing with her husband. When time permits, she also enjoys cross-stitching and writing poetry.



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**Eva Moon** began in 1994 as an Administrative Assistant I and was later promoted to an Administrative Assistant II. Her organizational and record keeping skills have contributed much to the effectiveness of her work. Ms. Moon is very dedicated to her job but retains a strong sense of humor. Her supervisor, **Lloyd Warford**, characterizes her attitude as “anxious to assist others” even in areas outside her usual duties. Eva is married to **James** who works for the Division of Medical Services. They have two children and four grandchildren. Eva collects stuffed bears and helps her husband with their greenhouse business.

The Volunteer Activities Council wants to say thanks to DHS employees who have helped with recent efforts.

About 55 students from the Bale Elementary School Choir came to sing Christmas carols for DHS on Dec. 8, 2000. The children sang in DPW and DSB and were thrilled that so many people showed up to hear them.

**Thanks a bunch!**



Both the VAC-sponsored Christmas food drive and coat drive were great successes. Both projects benefited children and families of Bale Elementary School in Little Rock. VAC received cleaned coats, still in cleaner bags and coats that look almost new. One employee even bought a new coat for a child. VAC gave Bale a van full of coats. Children were able to choose a coat and some of their parents who needed a coat also received one.



Do you have something you'd like to share in the newsletter? Send an email to [Joyce.Williams@mail.state.ar.us](mailto:Joyce.Williams@mail.state.ar.us). You can also fax items to (501) 682-6512 or call (501) 682-6580.